

Message Text

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TOKYO FOR FORSTER AND COOPER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: LOCAL MEDIA REACTION ON U.S.-ASEAN DIALOGUE

1. ANALYZING THE DIALOGUE AS A SUCCESS, BUSINESS TIMES CORRESPONDENT CHARLES CHAN WHO COVERED THE MEETING IN MANILA WRITES:

2. "ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, THE RECENT ASEAN-U.S.DIALOGUE IN MANILA CAN BE REGARDED AS A SUCCESS DESPITE THE U.S. REJECTION OF THE ASEAN PROPOSAL FOR A STABEX-TYPE ARRANGEMENT TO STABILIZE EARNINGS FROM EXPORTS OF COMMODITIES.

3. "OBSERVERS SAY THE BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENT WAS THAT, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ITS 10-YEAR HISTORY, ASEAN HAS EARNED THE RECOGNITION OF THE UNITED STATES WHICH SEES IT AS A PRAGMATIC REGIONAL GROUPING IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO DO SOME 'HORSE TRADING' WITH.

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 KUALA 06435 130909Z

4. "IN THE PROCESS, ASEAN HAS DONE A SERVICE TO OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES BECAUSE, AS U.S. UNDER-SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, MR. RICHARD N. COOPER EXPLAINED, IT WOULD SET THE PATTERN FOR OTHER DIALOGUES BETWEEN U.S. AND OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

5. "IN THE PAST,THE U.S. HAD ENGAGED IN DIALOGUES AND

CONSULTATIONS FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH DEVELOPED COUNTRIES ONLY AND IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT IN DECIDING TO EXTEND SUCH CONSULTATIONS TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, THE U.S. HAD CHOSEN ASEAN COUNTRIES TO BEGIN WITH.

6. "HOWEVER ITS AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE WITH ASEAN IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION, TO HOLD FURTHER DIALOGUES AND TO COLLABORATE ON ISSUES RELATED TO THE MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA, TO PUSH TRADE LIBERALIZATION AND OTHER NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE ISSUES LIKE COMMODITY ARRANGEMENTS AND THE COMMON FUND, WERE NOT AS CONCRETE AS THOSE REACHED BETWEEN ASEAN AND JAPAN.

7. "IN FAIRNESS, IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT BOTH SIDES HAD STRESSED RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING THAT THIS FIRST FORMAL CONTACT WAS ONLY EXPLORATORY AND WOULD NOT PRODUCE ANY CONCRETE AGREEMENT OR TREATY AS, TO QUOTE PHILIPPINES FOREIGN SECRETARY, GEN. CARLOS P. ROMULO: 'NOBODY IS NEGOTIATING ANYTHING.'

8. "DESPITE THAT, MR. COOPER, REGARDED IN WASHINGTON AS 'MR. ECONOMICS,' DID FORMALLY PLEDGE THE FULL COMMITMENT OF THE U.S. TO THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE ASEAN NATIONS AND ALSO GAVE AN ASSURANCE OF GREATER MARKET ACCESS FOR PRODUCTS FROM THE MEMBER COUNTRIES.

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PAGE 03 KUALA 06435 130909Z

9. "TO GIVE SUBSTANCE TO HIS ASSURANCE, MR. COOPER BRIEFED ASEAN ECONOMIC MINISTERS ON HOW THE GENERAL SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES (GSP) WORKED IN THE STATES AND ADVISED THEM ON METHODS TO SEEK PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT UNDER THE GSP FOR MORE ASEAN PRODUCTS.

10. "AN ASEAN LIST OF PRODUCTS WILL BE SUBMITTED FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS IN THE U.S. TO DETERMINE THEIR MERIT AND, WHILE HE COULD NOT GIVE ANY ASSURANCE ON THE OUTCOME OF THESE HEARINGS, MR. COOPER OBSERVED THAT 'AT LEAST THEY ARE IN' FOR CONSIDERATION WHEN THE GSP IS BEING REVIEWED.

11. "IN MR. COOPER'S OPINION, THE MOST CONCRETE PROPOSALS ASEAN MADE DURING THE DISCUSSIONS WERE THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW THE GSP COULD BE IMPROVED.

12. "ASEAN HAS ALSO TAKEN NOTE OF MR. COOPER'S VIEW THAT THE MTN OFFERED THE BEST CHANCES FOR GREATER MARKET ACCESS FOR THEIR PRODUCTS AND BOTH SIDES HAVE AGREED TO CONTINUE CONSULTATIONS ON QUESTIONS RELATED TO THESE IMPORTANT NEGOTIATIONS TO BE RESUMED IN GENEVA....

13. "THESE EXCHANGES OF VIEWS WHICH GAVE BOTH SIDES A BETTER INSIGHT INTO THE PROBLEMS FACED BY EACH OTHER WILL, IN THE VIEW OF MANY OBSERVERS, LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR ENHANCED ECONOMIC COOPERATION.

14. "THE FACT THAT AN AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL ASEAN-WASHINGTON COMMITTEE WILL BE SET UP IN THE AMERICAN CAPITAL TO FOLLOW-UP ON ASEAN-U.S. ACTIVITIES AND PROVIDE A CHANNEL FOR COMMUNICATION, AUGURS WELL FOR FUTURE ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND ASEAN." ITEM.
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